

## The Alexandria Gazette

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEB. 24.

## The Coming Municipal Election.

The interest in the approaching Municipal election increases. Meetings—Ward or General—are of almost nightly occurrence; the city is being actively canvassed for votes, by the contending parties; and as in days gone by, groups gather on the corners, to discuss the chances of success of the various candidates for the different offices. If the "Reform" movement has accomplished nothing else it has certainly infused a degree of interest, and aroused an excitement in regard to the affairs of the City, that have not been exhibited during the past three years. Whether the results will prove beneficial or otherwise, remains to be determined. Last night, in pursuance of a call of "the Committee," a meeting of the "Reform party" was held at Stewart's Hall. C. G. Van Ruyper, Secretary, called the meeting to order, when in the absence of the President, G. S. Miner, Willard Peirce was called to the chair. The minutes of the last meeting were read, after which a motion was made by ——— Palmer to reconsider a vote taken at the last meeting, on the nomination of certain Candidates who had by a published card, declined said nomination. Mr. Westcott said that when these names were selected, it had been because the gentlemen named were fully competent, and enjoyed the confidence of the people, for honesty and integrity. He had it from the mouths of two of these gentlemen, that no one had in any way ever been authorized to sign their names to the published card, declining the nomination. All kinds of trickery had been resorted to by their opponents, who had now come out under the title of "Anti-Reformers." Articles of the most scurrilous character, daily appeared against gentlemen opposed to this "Anti-Reform" party, and when he saw this trickery and scurrillity, it was a fair presumption that the publication of the names of many, which had appeared, as having withdrawn from the Reform ticket, might prove only a ruse of their opponents; and that the gentlemen named did not desire to decline. He knew that they would have no objection to receive the votes of the "Reformers" and all others that they could get, and he therefore hoped that the names would be continued on the Ticket and voted for by the party.

Mr. Palmer was in favor of an entire Reform ticket. He did not think it was necessary to throw away all the offices for the sake of electing a Mayor. He was for a full ticket with all new men and no old ones.

The motion to reconsider, was put, and decided by the Chair to be carried, though it was quite evident that the meeting did not understand the vote, the motion having been put in such a "questionable shape."

At this stage of the proceedings, Mr. Minor arrived in the meeting and took the Chair, Mr. Peirce vacating.

Mr. Miner said he had not expected to preside to night, or make any remarks. He had promised to answer the speech of Mr. Massey, and respond to the inquiry, "what reforms the new party desired?" He thought Mr. Massey had lived here long enough to know the many

abuses that existed in the Municipal Government. He proposed on Thursday night to speak at Liberty Hall, when he would refute the charge made by Mr. Massey, that there was any antagonism existing between the "Reform" party, and Gen. Slough. There will be no collision between the Military and Civil authorities, and he would then show up the trickery of his opponents in making this charge. Mr. Massey had said that the City was well policed—the picture was like a Paradise, where one could retire to rest, without fear of the slightest molestation, but it was the soldiers who were doing this police duty, who were receiving from \$13 to \$300 per month, all of which came from the pockets of the people. The speaker was not willing to give up his rights of citizenship to Military authority. He next declared his willingness to contribute liberally to the Common School System, and concluded his remarks amid applause.

Mr. Westcott next addressed the meeting, stating that one of its objects was to determine how citizens who had not been assessed, can become voters. He read from the acts of the Wheeling Legislature, a provision of the law in regard to the qualification of voters. He said that Mr. Beach, the Corporation Attorney had authorized the Commissioners to receive the names, and the Collectors to collect the amounts, from all who are entitled by residence and other qualifications to become voters. If a man had resided in this state two years; in the town one year, and in the ward thirty days, by having his name entered on the Assessor's books, and paying his tax, he would become a qualified voter. He considered it the duty of those who had nominated him, to put their shoulders to the wheel—there should be no going backwards. If the Ticket was not successful this year, then it would be next—the movement once fairly on foot, must prove a success, as the citizen of a recent date has as much interest in the affairs of the City, as those "to the manor born." He felt it his duty to say something in answer to the remarks made at the "Anti-Reform" meeting at Liberty Hall. He had only a slight acquaintance with Mr. Massey, but had been favorably impressed by his appearance and manner. He had been informed that Mr. M. was a fine speaker, made his points well, connected them properly, and was generally right in his conclusions. He had been sadly disappointed. The premises from which he argued were false, and his arguments adroit but shallow. He was however, indebted to Mr. Massey for throwing the first light upon the financial condition of affairs of this city, that he had been enabled to obtain since his residence here. He had never seen a report emanating from the present City Government, showing what disposition had been made of the moneys collected, nor had he ever heard of a report having been made. It was just for the purpose of obtaining a knowledge of the finances of the town that the "Reformers" desired to elect their men. The Speaker then referred to the small vote cast in this place at the late elections, and said what an exhibit to make to the heads of the Government at Washington or to the Congress! A place with a population of eighteen thousand souls, casting one hundred and twenty seven votes!—This was one of the reforms needed. He

thought that the U. S. Government had done a great service in taking the duties of the City government out of the hands of the dead functionaries. The Fire department he contended was not efficient. He did not suppose that the U. S. was going to keep steam fire engines here always. The General Government had all on its shoulders that it could stagger under, and he thought the city ought to take care of itself: then when the steam fire engines are taken away, what was to become of the town in case of a conflagration. If he was elected Mayor, he would soon make himself acquainted with all the laws, and if there was one in the code of Virginia bearing upon schools he would soon have it in force, or if there was none, he would donate every dollar of his salary, with dollar for dollar of his own on top, for the purpose of having at least one school where the poor children should be educated and brought up right. Mr. W. next alluded to the charge of exclusiveness preferred against Virginians, and said that an example had been furnished by Mr. Massey himself, in his remarks at Liberty Hall, when he went for excluding persons from office because they had been here only a short time. He contended that a citizen, whether he had been here a long or short time, was as much entitled to hold office as the old residents.

He then alluded to the assertion that the reform party was inimical to Gen. Slough, and said that the reformers, anti reformers and military would all be satisfied of the falsity of the charge, of any antagonism to the military authorities. It should be the aim of the civil to assist the military authorities. They had been told by Mr. Massey that the police were very efficient—in one instance he knew that they were very sharp, so sharp that he would not like to trust his wallet in their possession, or if he had a claim, and it was paid to this policeman, he would want a good officer very close at hand to secure the money.—This officer was the one who had had the card referred to signed and published, and he did not know what trick he might be guilty of.—At the conclusion of the meeting at Liberty Hall, Mr. Massey had summarily adjourned the meeting without giving time for any reply.—When the Reformers held a meeting they would give their opponents a fair chance to answer any of their speakers. Applause.

Mr. Westcott then moved to reconsider the vote taken a few moments previous, in reference to the withdrawn nominees, and moved to ratify their nomination. There might be a law to prevent free schools, but there was no law to prevent him from voting for whom he pleased, and he desired to vote for these gentlemen—motion adopted by the meeting.

Mr. Minor suggested that if there was any particular party on the list who was distasteful to the meeting, that his place could be filled by the meeting; but there was no response to the suggestion. Mr. Minor said he was surprised after the demands made by Mr. Massey last night, not to see him present. He had deviated from the Old Virginia custom of allowing a reply to his remarks; said that the assertion by Mr. Massey that there was antagonism between the Reform party and General Slough was a miserable trick which he would expose.

Mr. Helmick wanted a grand rally—a mass